



## Elementary Program



*"The child is both a hope and a promise for mankind"*  
- Maria Montessori

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## Introduction

Continuing her insightful work into the mind and development of the young child, Maria Montessori developed an excellent curriculum for the elementary years. As with the primary program for ages 3-6, the elementary program is based on individualized instruction uniquely designed to meet the developmental, social and educational needs of the child from 6-12 years of age. It centers on an integrated vision of knowledge, emphasizing the inter-relatedness of fields of study while allowing each child the time and space to explore in-depth at his or her own pace.

The prepared Montessori environment maximizes independent learning and exploration on the part of the child. Each child works in an individual way with his own store of knowledge, allowing him to progress at his own pace. Montessori individualized instruction deals in the concrete, making use of manipulatives that materialize abstract concepts.

All subjects are introduced in the elementary classroom. These include language arts, mathematics, geometry, botany, zoology, Spanish, geography, the physical sciences, and the arts. Children are given key lessons that allow for open-ended, unlimited exploration in areas of specific interest to the child.

At Village Montessori, Elementary is divided into two groups: Lower Elementary and Upper Elementary. The Montessori Elementary program is however, a six-year program and is not complete until the 6<sup>th</sup> year. Not every child is ready to enter the Elementary program at age 6. Some children are better served in Primary until age 7. Each child will be evaluated by our Elementary teaching staff to determine readiness for the Elementary program.

## Characteristics of the Elementary child

### **Social:**

The social elementary student is expected to possess self-control, grace, and courtesy. His/her interactions with adults should be respectful, poised and at ease. Peer interactions should be cooperative, courteous, and respectful. The child should be able to express him/herself and use appropriate words rather than physical aggression to solve conflict.

### **Personal:**

The independently functioning elementary student should have mastered self-care and responsibility. Elementary students are expected to manage such tasks as:

- Preparing their own lunch
- Cleaning up after themselves independently
- Setting a clock and getting up on their own
- Cooperating in arriving at school on time
- Managing homework assignments, remembering work folders
- Dressing and managing personal hygiene
- Packing their school bag daily with items needed

The child should be self-directed, able to stay on task, and able to complete work

## Food Guidelines & Information

*Snack:* Each student will bring a healthy snack from home...

### *Lunch*

- Lunch is sent in daily from home.
- Please choose sensible, nutritious items. (The office has guidelines published by the Department of Human Resources on file for you to review and some lunch box suggestions.)
- **Please, no candy, cake, cookies, muffins, fast food, juice, or highly processed foods.**

### Guidelines:

- VMS provides napkins, cutlery and *water*.
- Please **do not pack** drinks.
- DHR requires that every lunch contains at least **a serving of fruit, vegetables, and protein.** source.
- The State also requires that all lunches containing items which require refrigeration be sent in a thermal lunch box with an ice pack.
- Please utilize a **plain lunch container**, without distracting logos or commercial cartoon images. Real items (such as animals) may be displayed.
- **Unconsumed Food** - Any portions of food or drink which are served to children or placed on the table for service and are not consumed shall be thrown away.
- VMS recommends **reusable containers**, for ecological and economic reasons.
- **Label all containers** and ice pack with last name in permanent marker.
- Lunch boxes **must be labeled on the outside**, so they are easily identifiable by staff.
- Children will be given ample time to complete lunch and then be asked to clean up. Staff may encourage your child to eat, but will in no way force your child to finish, nor will they feed your child.

## Personal Items

VMS provides an extremely interesting variety of daily activities for all students. Personal items such as toys brought from home can be distracting and disruptive. Of course, if your child has an item related to a current topic of study, such as a book, etc., he or she may bring it in. If you are in doubt as to whether an item is appropriate, feel free to ask your child's teacher. Village Montessori is not responsible for items brought from home.

## Dress Code

### Clothing:

- Items depicted on clothing should be off reality - no cartoons, kid characters or other distracting images.
- Solids, prints, or patterns are the least distracting in the classroom setting.
- **Straps must be three fingers in width - no spaghetti straps.**
- Shorts should be worn under skirts for all ages.
- No midriff tops, tutus, pajamas, or Halloween/costume pieces

### Footwear:

- Flexible, practical shoes are recommended.
- Comfortable tennis shoes or leather shoes are most appropriate in Montessori learning environment.
- No open toe shoes, slip-ons, flip-flops or sandals
- No boots worn inside
- No Crocs
- No light up shoes
- No high heels or cowboy boots
- Please provide indoor shoes to be kept at school. Slip-ons are acceptable.

### Jewelry and Accessories:

- Simple hair ornamentation such as barrettes, elastics, and plain headbands may be worn.
- Small pieces of jewelry are permitted if they do not distract from the child's work.
- No make-up
- No artificial fingernails for safety reasons.

\*It is at the teacher's discretion whether students will be permitted to participate in school activities based on their attire for safety or health reasons.

Children's clothing may still become soiled. Please keep this in mind when helping your child select clothes. Whenever possible, all children are given outdoor playtime. Remember to send in coats or sweaters labeled with the last name. A full extra set of clothing should be kept at school in case of accidents.

## Birthdays

Birthdays are momentous events in your child's life.... Please speak with your child's teacher and he/she will advise you what the procedure for birthdays is in their class. Please refrain from having group party pick-ups at carpool.

\*Village Montessori will not distribute birthday party invitations or thank you notes at school.

## Parent-Teacher Conferences

- Conferences happen twice a year; one in the Fall and one in the Spring.
- Please refer to our school calendar for conference dates.
- The teachers will determine how to divide the conferences to the greatest benefit of each family.
- If you cannot make your scheduled conference time, we ask that you try to switch with another parent and then inform the school and your child's teacher at least a day in advance.

**Conferences are very important**, so if for any reason you are unable to meet with your child's teacher please call and schedule a phone conference.

## Parent Study Groups and workshops

Your attendance at Parent Education events is expected as you are partners in your child's education with Village Montessori School. Through these presentations, you will have the opportunity to further familiarize yourself with the Montessori philosophy and materials, not to mention gain insights into effective Montessori parenting.

Individual conferences are held to discuss the individual child's experiences and progress. To understand these experiences and to learn more about the materials, it is very important that parents attend study groups. This will enhance your understanding at your personal conferences. Parents have also found that study groups improve parenting skills because suggestions are given on discipline, preparing your home environment, and enhancing your child's learning experience at school.

## From the Classroom

- Work will be sent home with your child periodically.
- The children in Lower Elementary have a folder that is sent home each **Friday**. Please empty the folder and send it back to school on **Monday** morning.
- The school folder is your child's responsibility - this is a good opportunity to encourage your child to be the one responsible for remembering the folder on Friday.
- Please also remember that the very nature of **Montessori materials does not produce much take-home work since children are working in a concrete manner much of the time**. The amount of paperwork you see coming home does not directly correlate to the amount of work that he or she has accomplished at school.

In the Montessori classroom, **the learning process is emphasized**. Accuracy of results comes with practice. Some of the work coming home may not always have accurate results (e.g., misspelled words, incorrect mathematical answers). It is best not to point out the "errors," as your child is learning the process and may be discouraged from practicing if the work is not yet "perfect." When the teacher notices consistent erroneous results, he or she will correct the process. Please call to discuss with the teacher if you have questions regarding the contents of your child's take-home work.

# Attendance

## *Arrival and Departure routines:*

- Drop-off → 8:15 – 8:30
- Pick-up → 3:00  
\*Fee of \$1/minute after 3:10
- Changes in carpool must be documented in writing; alternate driver must show photo I.D.
- **No cell phone** use in carpool
- Enter from Steeple Run and exit on Woodstock Road
- Elementary children are expected to be able to buckle/unbuckle and be ready to exit the car independently.
- Please have goodbyes completed before it is time for your child to exit.

## *Tardiness and Absenteeism:*

- Elementary children still need a dependable schedule. The classroom is a collaborative community that has a definitive schedule. It is upsetting to a child if he/she is often “out-of-sync” with the rest of the class. **Please avoid unnecessary late arrivals**, which can be frustrating for your child and disruptive to the class. It is vital that your child arrives at school on time.
- Arrivals after 10:00 will require a note from a doctor verifying an appointment.
- Families are to contact the school the first day your child is absent.
- After two days a doctor’s note will be required for the absences to be considered excused.
- After 5 unexcused absences (in total) the school will contact you. If we do not receive a response after the second attempt, a certified letter will be sent to your home. **Fulton county requires us to make them aware of excessive unexcused absences.**
- Partial day absences will be excused when accompanied by a specialist letter (e.g. doctor, dentist, therapist etc..)
- Should your child require an extended absence for any reason please contact the teacher to discuss prior to missing any school.
- Tardiness also has an impact on your child’s learning and the classroom environment. Please be respectful and ensure your child arrives promptly.
- A student must have a written note from the parent or legal guardian after an absence.
- Excessive absences or tardiness will result in meeting with the administration and the child’s teacher.
- Records are kept daily and reported to the state as required.

## Medication, Health, and Safety

### *Immunization records:*

- **Due on the first day of school**; attendance prohibited without form: GA Form 3231 revision 1/100

### *Medication:*

- First aid for minor incidents will be administered
- See parent handbook for more medication information

### *Health:*

\*Village will adhere to DHR guidelines for all sicknesses; the complete chart is in the front office.

- No rashes, vomiting, diarrhea, sore throat or green mucus will be allowed in school
- Must be fever and/or symptoms free for 24 hours without the help of medicine
- Please notify the school of any diagnosis
- If your child is diagnosed with a communicative disease, you must have a doctor's note to reenter school.

If you have concerns about your child's health, please consult your doctor. Our staff may not give you health advice. Please keep your child home if you have concerns that they may not be well.

### *Safety:*

Village Montessori uses Standard Response Protocol developed by "I love you guys" foundation. This information is accessible by going to [www.iluvuguys.org](http://www.iluvuguys.org). Monthly drills are carried out as required by State and local authorities.

All classes have an intercom system, and phone land line. Teachers have cell phones and Walkie-Talkies available.

## Electronic Devices

VMS has a **no personal electronics policy for students**.

No electronic devices such as, but not limited to, phones, I-watches, laptops, tablets, I- Pod, etc. shall be permitted to be in the possession of VMS students while in class or on school property.

If a student defies this rule and has any such device at school without turning it in, it will be taken away and held in the office until a parent picks it up and meets with the student and administration. At the discretion of the administration the student may also be subject to after school detention or suspended for non-compliance with this policy.

If a student needs a phone for afterschool, that phone may be turned into the front office with a note or prior notification to administration. The phone will be kept in the front office until dismissal.

## Visitation and Observations

### *Visitors:*

- Classes are in session after 8:30 A.M.
- Parents and other visitors must sign in at the **front office** after 8:30 A.M.
- All school entrances are locked after 8:30 A.M.

### *Classroom Observations:*

Parents are encouraged to observe their child's class as well as other classes. Observation of a class in progress is an exciting experience. However, to maintain the orderly environment, and out of respect for the child's work pattern, we have certain guidelines and suggestions.

- Please make an appointment with the front office
- The size of the classroom permits only two people to observe at a time
- Please remain as unobtrusive as possible so the natural activities of the children can be sustained for your observation
- Prior to entering a classroom, Observation Guidelines will be given to you. We appreciate your cooperation in following these guidelines.
- If you have any questions arising out of your classroom observation, please feel free to schedule an appointment with your child's teacher, as well as with our Director of Education. **Please note:** Parent **observations are available** throughout the year **after October 1<sup>st</sup> and before May 10<sup>th</sup>**.

## Communication

### *School Calendar:*

Please refer to the school calendar for specific holidays and special events. The calendar is subject to change. Parents will be notified of any changes.

***Office Hours:***

Phone: 770.552.0834

August – May: 7:30 A.M.- 6:00 P.M., Monday- Friday

Summer office hours: 9:00 A.M. – 2:00 P.M., Monday – Friday

Email: frontdeskvms@gmail.com

See the Parent Handbook for more information

***Direct Communication with Teachers:***

- Communication between parents and Village Montessori teachers is crucial. Teachers are your first line of communication. School administration may only get involved after you have spoken directly to the teacher in matters concerning your child or the classroom.
- Teachers are often unable to speak at length during school hours while children are present. An appointment can be arranged after school.
- Please send a note or call the office and leave a message to schedule an appointment.
- Teachers may be reached by e-mail.

It is the school policy that no one on staff other than the lead teacher and the Director of Education communicates with parents in matters of their child’s behavior and learning issues or gives advice on that subject. If you have questions or concerns about administrative issues only, please contact the office.

## **Other Guidelines**

- No child’s picture or information shall be submitted to be made public without prior permission from VMS administration.
- Notices, flyers, and newsletters, written or electronic, are to be submitted to the office for review prior to distributing to parents or the community. If you need to post announcements or posters, please check with front office before posting.
- Approved information to be distributed to staff or parents need not be mailed – we have a system set up for distribution. Please submit by Tuesday morning to go out with Thursday’s folders.
- Please remember confidentiality is important, do not discuss any child or family, and conduct yourself in a professional manner.

***Fundraising at VMS:***

- Annual Auction: This annual event raises funds for the Village Montessori scholarship fund.

See the Village Montessori Handbook for our Discipline Policy and other matters not covered in this Elementary Addendum.

## Summary

Thank you for taking the time to read our Parent Handbook and Addendum.

Village Montessori School reserves the right to revise this handbook.

Village Montessori School is dedicated to exploring and maintaining the principles of an AMI Montessori education in a warm and nurturing environment that is meticulously prepared to meet the needs of your child. In addition to our commitment to your child, we are also dedicated to family support. We provide parent conferences, study groups, parenting classes and a Parent Association to support Village Montessori families. We encourage parental involvement and allow many opportunities to volunteer. Look for our newsletter each month to keep you informed.

We at Village Montessori School welcome all our families and are looking forward to another great school year!